

-28-

1. A film-forming gel which adheres to mucosal surfaces and body tissues and provides localized delivery of a pharmaceutical to a treatment site, said gel comprising at least one water soluble alkyl cellulose or water soluble hydroxyalkyl cellulose; a bioadhesive polymer, a nonaqueous solvent, and at least one active pharmaceutical component.

2. The gel of claim 1 in which said water soluble hydroxyalkyl cellulose is hydroxypropyl cellulose.

3. The gel of claim 1 in which said solvent comprises 95% ethanol and 5% water.

4. The gel of claim 1 in which said pharmaceutical component is a topical anesthetic.

5. The gel of claim 1 in which said pharmaceutical component is a topical medicine for fever blisters and cold sores.

6. The gel of claim 1 in which said bioadhesive polymer is polyacrylic acid.

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-29-

7. The gel of claim 1 in which said bioadhesive polymer is polyvinylpyrrolidone.

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